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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

**INDIANAPOLIS MAN SENTENCED FOR GUN TRAFFICKING AND
UNLAWFUL POSSESSION OF HANDGUN**

PRESS RELEASE

Susan W. Brooks, United States Attorney for the Southern District of Indiana, announced that DENNIS LEWIS, 32, was sentenced to 37 months' imprisonment by U.S. District Judge John Daniel Tinder following his guilty pleas to: (1) aiding and abetting making false statements in connection with the acquisition of firearms; and (2) unlawful possession of a firearm by a convicted felon. This case was the result of an investigation by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives.

The conviction for unlawful possession of a firearm by a convicted felon was based on an incident that occurred on August 3, 2004, when Lewis possessed a loaded, .45 caliber handgun in the area of Lexington and Harlan Streets in Indianapolis. The gun, which was located in a vehicle parked on the street, was discovered when an Indianapolis police officer

was flagged down by a person yelling that Lewis had a gun and was trying to kill him. Lewis has two prior felony convictions for transporting/selling cocaine.

The conviction for aiding and abetting another in making false statements in connection with the acquisition of firearms was based on a “straw purchase” of handguns from Bradis, Inc., a federally licensed firearms dealer, in Camby, Indiana. On August 5, 2004, Marie Polston went to Bradis with Ivan Nunez. Lewis had introduced Polston to Nunez so that she could buy guns for Nunez. With Nunez’s assistance, Polston selected three semi-automatic handguns to purchase. Polston lied on a federal form that purchasers of firearms are required to complete when she represented that she was the “actual buyer” of the firearms. In fact, she was purchasing them for Nunez in exchange for money. Polston was informed that her purchase would be delayed pending a federal background check.

Polston returned to Bradis on August 12, 2004, with Lewis and Nunez. After Nunez gave Polston money, Polston and Lewis entered Bradis. Polston recertified that the answers she had given on August 5 were still true and correct. Polston then paid for the three pistols with the money that Nunez had given her. After completing the transaction, Polston and Lewis left the store and got back into the Ford SUV. Polston then handed the guns to Nunez.

Polston plead guilty to making false statements in connection with the purchase of firearms and was previously sentenced to six months’ imprisonment. Nunez plead guilty to aiding and abetting Polston with making false statements in connection with the purchase of firearms and was previously sentenced to 29 months’ imprisonment.

According to Assistant United States Attorney James P. Hanlon who represented the government, this case was prosecuted as part of the Department of Justice's Project Safe Neighborhoods Program to reduce gun violence.

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